

Primitive Religion

Elucidated, *and* Restored.

M. I N A *W*
Supplementary Abbreviation

OF A L A T E

K Dissertation on the Original Doctrines
of the METEMPSYCHOSIS;

W H E R E I N

The Arguments of the benevolent Author lose much
of their deserved Force, and Influence, by the
Want of strict Connection in Matter and Form.

In Short Meditations,

On G O D,

| On FAITH and WORSHIP,

On CREATION,

| On a FUTURE STATE.

Wherein, some of those important Heads are
considered in *quite a New Light*,

By a D I V I N E, of NO CHURCH.

BATH: Printed by R. CRUTTWELL,
For L. BULL, Bookseller, on the WALKS;
And sold by L. HAWES and Co. Pater-Noster-
Row, London. 1776.

Primitive Religion

Elucidated and Referred

Supplementary Illustrations

to the Primitive Religion

Discussed on the General Principles
of the Metaphysical Sciences





Primitive Religion.

CHAP. I.

Of G O D.

THERE can be but ONE GOD.
 —He must be *eternal*, and
immutable; to worship any other
being, or *matter*, under whatsoever
 denomination, or form, *as God*; is
 not only highly absurd, but impious.

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—The *stronger*, or *coercive* attributes of God, must be *All-mighty Power*, *Wisdom*, and *Justice*; his benign Attributes, *Love*, and *Mercy*.—Man has fallen into innumerable errors, most fatal in their consequences, respecting his present, as well as future felicity; by forming his ideas of the attributes, qualities, and operations of the *Deity*, by the similitudes of an earthly *sovereign*, or *parent*.

C H A P. II.

OF CREATION.

Section 1. **T**HE Creation of this terrestrial globe, and surrounding planetary system, appears a stupendous work of supreme wisdom and power; from what we feel, see, and know, of our own sphere, we can only form an unprofitable guess of what passes, or exists in the others; our own state calls alone for our attention, although the connected chain, and mutual dependence of the *whole* is most obvious.

Sect. 2. THE consideration of the material parts of our globe, howsoever wonderful!

—The *stronger*, or *coersive* attributes of God, must be *All-mighty Power*, *Wisdom*, and *Justice*; his benign Attributes, *Love*, and *Mercy*.—Man has fallen into innumerable errors, most fatal in their consequences, respecting his present, as well as future felicity; by forming his ideas of the attributes, qualities, and operations of the *Deity*, by the similitudes of an earthly *sovereign*, or *parent*.

C H A P. II.

O F C R E A T I O N.

Section 1. **T**HE Creation of this terrestrial globe, and surrounding planetary system, appears a stupendous work of supreme wisdom and power; from what we feel, see, and know, of our own sphere, we can only form an unprofitable guess of what passes, or exists in the others; our own state calls alone for our attention, although the connected chain, and mutual dependence of the *whole* is most obvious.

Sect. 2. THE consideration of the material parts of our globe, howsoever wonderful

wonderful ! and other inexplicable properties, is foreign to the present purpose. He that formed them can alone investigate them ; its inhabitants alone being the subject of these meditations.

Sect. 3. THE profusion of animal life scattered over the face of the earth, in the bosom of the deep, and in the surrounding atmosphere, appears astonishing to a thinking being, but more especially those animated forms, who bear the marks of rationality ; of these, mankind stands in the first rank ; and those commonly called the brutes, seem only to move in a lower degree of subordination to that ruling power, which commands the *whole*.

Sect. 5. WHEN

Sect. 4. WHEN a man of deep reflection surveys the amazing apparatus of all nature, he cannot avoid asking, Why are these things so? to what cause? to what end, or purpose, has such infinite power and wisdom been employed?—He will proceed in his enquiries, and say, why am I brought into existence?—Why am I, with myriads of my fellow animals, under *various forms*, doomed, and fixed, to this spot?

Sect. 5. I SEE myself, with a race of *intelligent beings*, brought into existence, without our assent or knowledge; destined to a residence, pregnant with innumerable evils, and subjected to miseries natural and moral,

ral, which we cannot foresee or avoid; and which we are not conscious we have deserved:—a dismal state this, it must be confessed, and were we to *stop here*, and draw our conclusions from these premises, we should stand justify'd in thinking, there is no God; or, that that God is not only unjust, but cruel; and too many it is probable do *stop here*, and thence flows infidelity, and immoralities of every species; but let us go on.

Sect. 6. HERE I will adopt the words, which a Christian Philosopher puts into the mouth of a Hea-then; “ If there is a power above
 “ us, (and that there is, all nature
 “ cries aloud through all her works)
 “ he

“ he must delight in virtue,” that is, he must be *a just God*; as such, he cannot without impiety be supposed wantonly to exert allmighty power in the creation of Beings, which seem only to be brought into existence, to taste the bitter cup of affliction, disease, and death; the conclusion is self evident, namely, there must have been some original *antecedent cause* for this miserable allotment of humanity, in which the brute creation participates; and it is most certainly the duty of every rational being *humbly* to investigate *this cause*, in a matter so self-essential, and of such infinite moment, to his present and future well being; that his mind may be free’d from all doubts

doubts, respecting the ideas he ought to entertain of his Creator, that he may enable himself “to justify the ways of God to Man,” and account for this seeming contradiction, between his works and his attributes.

Sect. 7. THE modern conceit that the *personal original sin* contracted by any individuals should be *entailed* on their successors or descendants; and that those should be punishable *therefore*, seems repugnant to reason and justice; consequently injurious to God; as such an opinion destroys the very essence and being of *Free Will*; therefore this cannot be *the cause* of our allotment here——it follows then, we must proceed farther in our search for the *real one*; and
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in order thereto, it becomes necessary, a priori, to enquire into the nature and essential qualities of Man and Brute.

Sect. 8. All *true* Philosophers are unanimous in pronouncing Man a *Being* compounded of an intelligent *Spirit*, and *Matter*; the first *immortal*, the last *mortal*, or perishable; whilst the wonderful union between this spirit and matter, or *soul* and *body*, subsists, the dependance on each other, is absolute, and mutual; as the material parts acquire strength and enlargement, the active powers of the spirit acquire new force; neither of them can engage in perfect or uniform action, without the participation of each.

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A rational arrangement of reflections and abstraction of Ideas, cannot be produced, when the Brain and its appendages are by violence, or other occult causes, obstructed in its proper action.

Sect. 9. WHEN the constitution of the body, and its secretions which are parts of it, abound with Bile, the Soul is dark, designing, suspicious and unfocial; when the sanguine cast is predominant, the soul is active, enterprizing, fiery, yet open and unsuspecting; when phlegm, and lymph, the colder humours, take the lead; the soul is lazy, complacent, inactive, and in the general inoffensive; in some individuals where these principal fluids are in irregular proportion

portion, the soul partakes of a mixt character ; displaying at different times, all the qualities above enumerated ; but, when they are happily and equally blended in the constitution, the solids usually act with proper elastic energy ; the nervous fluid, the most essential of all, flows with uninterrupted pace ; the body is in health, and the soul capable of assuming a perfect character.

Sect. 10. FROM the considerations in the two last sections, it appears to a moral certainty, the *material* part of our compound was originally formed for a temporary residence for the spiritual ; and we see death, or a total deprivation of sense, and motion,

tion, in the *former*, can alone dissolve the union, and set the latter at liberty.

Sect. II. IN the state and predicament above described, stand the Brute Creation ; at least all of them, that fall within our immediate consideration and observation; *human pride*, unsupported by reason or philosophy, can alone conceive, that Man is a compound of soul and body ; and at the same time, vainly imagine and assert, the Brutes are mere material perishable machines ; what conviction have we from fact, reason, or philosophy for the one, that the brutes have not an equal claim to? they are as stupendously formed as ourselves, their internal

ternal construction, on the same amazing principles as our own; their animal œconomy, secretions, and excretions, conducted through similar tubes; and the circulation of life, sensation and motion, the same in the mouse, as in the Monarch! the external covering of many of the tribes, far excelling ours in beauty, and convenience; their mode of generation, and propagation of the species, the same; with our perceptive faculties, and tumultuous, as well as amicable passions; they are subjected to the same natural evils, the same casualties, the same diseases, and the same death; they dream as well as we do, which phænomenon has been thought by some sages, to be one of the strong-

est proofs of the separate existence of the soul or spirit from the body; their depth of sentiment, reflection, or cogitation, we are utterly strangers to; and all the visible difference between us and them, is, that respecting their *rational powers*, they *seem* only to move in a sphere some degrees below us: Whether this distinction reflects honour upon Man, let the general tenor of his life and actions determine; and touching Man's assumed right of murdering them for his food, see the subject discussed at large by the Author of the dissertation, under his third general head.

Sect. II. SUCH being the unhappy destined lot of *Man* and *Brute*,
they

they must by some mode of transgression have drawn this chastisement upon themselves, for God is just, and never created any being to be unhappy; their present state of existence could not be the period which drew his displeasure on them; their state of infancy is an *inoffensive* state, and yet subjected to numberless calamities; their residence here is compulsive, not voluntary; it follows then, that the period of their original culpability must have been in *another state and place*.

Sect. 10. As mere matter can neither think or act, it could not offend; consequently the soul, or spiritual part of the compound, must

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have

have been the sole aggressor;—as the soul is immortal, and is supposed to exist *somewhere*, after its separation from the body, it must necessarily have existed *somewhere*, before its union with it; and wheresoever that *pre-existent* state was, there must have arisen its original offence.

Sect. 14. From the foregoing propositions, the subsequent corollaries may be fairly drawn: 1st, That this globe was constructed for the reception of *Man* and *Brute*. 2d, That the *souls* or *spirits* of all mortal forms, are stationed here as delinquents, in a state of banishment, purgation, punishment and trial, for crimes committed in a former state of existence;
imprisoned

imprisoned more immediately *in*, and united *with*, a material, corrupt, and perishable covering of most marvellous construction, yet subjected to every degrading and mortifying appendage, that a spiritual and intelligent being can possibly be doomed to suffer. 3dly, Their offence must have been great, that drew on them so severe a sentence. 4thly, Their original dignity must have been of the *first magnitude*, by the profusion of Wisdom and Power, employed by their great Creator; not only in the wonderful construction of their corporeal, mortal companions, but in that also of this globe, destined solely for their habitation. 5thly, That it is more than probable, the

the other planetary systems were produced and formed for similar purposes.

Sect. 15. THE next circumstance, which falls under the consideration of a man of reflection, is, the specific nature of those spiritual beings, which we see are decreed to animate material filth and corruption; why created? whence they came? and what the complection of their crime? it should seem that the offence of all must have been *nearly equal*, and of the same die; as we observe the noble and the ignoble, the prince and the beggar, the celebrated beauty, the peacock, and the sow that wallows in the mire, are universally condemned

demned to undergo the same irksome, degrading, and *humiliating, common offices* of existence;—oh pride! oh vanity! oh arrogance! on what a *dunghill* dost thou erect thy standard!

Sect. 16. WE know only of three creations of intelligent beings; to wit, *Angel, Man, and Brute*; a disquisition into the nature and attributes of the *first*, may lead us to a right understanding of the other two: Our idea of Angels, present them to us as beings originally *purely spiritual*; as such, their supposed familiar intercourse with mankind, as recorded in some histories and fables of antiquity, was utterly impossible; as they were in their
nature

nature impervious to the sight, hearing, and contact of human organs; (which proves also the folly of believing in the *appearance* of ghosts and spirits) where the Angels have been said to sojourn, converse, and eat and drink with mortals, it cannot be *literally* taken and understood, without the most manifest violation of sense, reason, and philosophy. Craft ever found its account in imposing on the credulity of ignorance and superstition, and nothing was more common amongst the ancients, than *realising* visionaries;—the word Angel in its primitive sense meant only the *Spirit of God*, or his providence, operating invisibly in the direction of human affairs; in process
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of time it acquired a new character, was rendered *personal*, to signify a *spiritual Messenger*, sent express from God, on extraordinary emergencies, either as comforters, supporters, admonishers, or executioners, of some dire events; but if these beings were invested with powers to assume at will a *real* human form, they lost for *that time* their angelic character, as they ceased whilst under that form to be purely spiritual:—The power of God is infinite, and it becomes not us, to doubt, or limit it; therefore it is not irrational to conclude *in this case*, that it may have been these cœlestial spirits who have, from time to time, in every part of this habitable globe, appeared to mankind,

kind, under the different characters of divine legislators, prophets, and sages; commissioned to enlighten the species, correct their morals, and lead them from error; respecting their duties to God and Man: but it is most probable, that if these beings are delegated by God to act, or interfere in human concerns, their sphere of action is *generally invisible*, and known only by its effects; the more especially, as their familiar intercourse with *Man*, has not been *pretended* for many ages past; and no one will deny, but that through the succession of *those past ages, to the present*, there has been as great a call for supernatural warnings and admonitions, as there ever was since his Creation.

Sect. 17. IN

Sect. 17. IN an humble enquiry into *a cause* for the creation of Angels, we cannot succeed better, than by a short paraphrase on the sentiments of the Apostle and Philosopher St. James, in the 1st chapter of his General Epistle, verse 18th, applying to the *Angels*, what he there says touching the Creation of *Mankind*;—his words are, “ Of his
 “ own will he begat (created) us
 “ with the word of truth, that we
 “ should be a kind of *first fruits* of
 “ his creatures.”——God, being *sole* in intelligent existence, (let us humbly suppose) he graciously resolved to *emanate* part of his beatific qualities, to a new Creation; (Angels) these he endowed with a certain portion

tion of his divine spirit, and intellectual properties ; consequently they became immortal, spiritual, rational, free, and *accountable* beings : He made them *free*, because a *restrained* adoration and obedience to his laws, would have been unworthy *him* and *them*. Possibly also, they may have been destined to other offices in the cœlestial regions, of which, in our present state, we can form no conception.

Sect. 18. WHATSOEVER LAWS were enjoined to be observed by this new creation, can only be surmised ; but it is natural to think they came within the short compass of, adoring their Creator, paying a ready and voluntary

luntary submission to his *declared will*, and an affectionate regard to one another; small as this tribute was, for the enjoyment of eternal happiness, and easy, as it should seem, to be paid; we are told, in the concurring opinion and belief of all mankind, by the earliest records of time, that a large portion of these first created intelligent beings, fell from their obedience, abused the free agency given to them, and became rebels to their Creator; that for this crime they were by his almighty power, driven from his presence, and banished from the cœlestial regions; by their origin and near relation to God, they were *immortal*, and could not be annihilated, consequently they

must exist *somewhere*; but where, is the question?

Sect. 19. HAVING, as proposed in the 16th section, made a rational, and satisfactory enquiry into the creation and nature of the Angels, as necessary, to account for, and elucidate the origin and nature of Man and Brute; and to form a probable conjecture, why they were brought into *being*; the course of my meditations leads me to consider, what light may be thrown on the important subject, by the striking similitude between the apostate angelic spirits, and the souls of mankind; leaving the brutal spirit, to a distinct and subsequent review.

Sect.

Sect. 20. THE apostate spirit, and the soul of man, all agree, are emanations of the Deity, and of cœlestial origin; they are equally dignified as *immortal, intelligent, free, and accountable Beings*; they labour alike under the displeasure of their Creator; the one, for a lapse in their original state; the other, for a lapse in a *pre-existent* one; and they are both supposed to be in the predicament of *degradation, punishment, and probation*.——We hear of no particular *local* designation for the punishment of the Apostate Angels; but that they were *banished* to an *inferior region*.——The conception, that Man was created to supply the places of the apostate spirits, (an opinion that has
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been rashly entertained by some philosophers and divines) is repugnant to the benign attributes of God, who, as before remarked, cannot, without impiety, be conceived to create any being to be unhappy; now Man is born to misery, *the child of wrath*; therefore the opinion stands self-refuted if taken *literally*, but if understood in a *sense* that *may* be rationally applied to it, the opinion is certainly well founded.

Sect. 21. STILL the great, the important question remains to be solved, why was Man created? and his soul or spirit doomed to sorrow, as the sparks fly upward?—There is but *one* solution of these interesting

ing queries, which can fully account for *them*, and every other phænomenon in nature;—A solution! that clearly justifies the ways of God to men, that lays Man open to the knowledge of *himself*, informs him of the dignity of his nature, and origin, and why he was placed here, in a state of degradation and punishment; and consequently, leads him to the only, and infallible means, by which he can work out his restoration to the favour of his Creator: namely,—*that Man and Angel is one and the same individual Apostate Spirit.*—By this solution, the words of St. James* acquires some meaning, they have none without it; for Man, simply so considered, could not be
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* See Sect. 17.

“ the *first* fruits of God’s creatures,” because the Angels were a *prior* creation ; but Man and Angels being the same, the seeming contradiction is cleared up ; and the opinion that Man was created to fill up the vacant seats in Heaven, becomes *in this sense* well founded, but in no other ; God, having graciously given to the Apostate Angels under the *human form*, sufficient powers to accomplish that great end.

Sect. 22. EXTRAVAGANT as the foregoing doctrine may appear to some, (whose unprofitable attachments to the dissipations of life, have unhappily prevented their casting a serious thought on their nature
and

and origin.) Forty years meditation, study and reasoning, have brought me a full conviction, that there is no other *hypothesis* which can, consistent with piety, reason or philosophy, reconcile the *creation* of that miserable being *Man*, with the wisdom, justice, or benign attributes of God; or afford any probable cause, why? and to what end or purpose, the material universe was created and constructed. —The doctrine is far from being *new*, it is as antient, (if we may be allowed the expression) almost as *time itself*; it was promulged by the first sages, which enlightened this globe; when in all likelihood, one universal faith, and worship of the Deity prevailed; and the *concomitant*
doctrine

doctrine of the *Metempsychosis* was received with general assent by the inhabitants of the whole earth ; as the earliest records of all nations testify. —How Mankind, at least the greater part of them, came to lose sight of these sublime doctrines ; which hourly has the sanction of every appearance in nature, for their support, is the wonder !

Sect. 23. In section 19, we left the *brutal spirit* to a subsequent consideration.—What has been said in the two last sections, is equally applicable *here* ; and whoever will divest himself of *pride*, and *prejudice* ; and candidly weigh what has been advanced on this part of God's creation

tion in the 11th and 15th sections of these meditations, and compare their state to his own; his high conceptions of himself will suffer a considerable abatement, and his self-importance melt before him; he will no longer look upon them as beings only created for his *use, abuse, and cruelty*; he will view and consider them as kindred spirits, clothed in the same flesh and blood; with the same feelings of pleasure and pain, and involved with himself under the same sentence, the same punishment, the same degradation, for *the same crime*; and equally with him labouring under the just displeasure of their Creator; he will cease to add to the weight of their natural afflictions,

tions, and on the contrary, cherish, comfort, and defend them, when it is possibly in his power, in the *Bosom of Humanity*; if Charity from man to man is a virtue that covers a multitude of sins, surely it is much greater, when extended to the brute creation; whose state of existence, in many instances, is made by *him* more miserable than his own, or than their merciful Creator intended; *theirs* is evidently a state of the lowest degradation and punishment; *his*, altho' in the like predicament in a *less degree*, is blest with superior powers, which enable him to make his lot here sufferable, if not comfortable; if otherwise, it is his own fault; not so the Brutes;—
and

and therefore the objects of greater commiseration.—If these meditations should ever meet the public eye, the candid and unprejudiced reader will readily excuse the foregoing reflections, flowing from the feelings of justice and compassion; and a deep sense and resentment of the too common barbarous treatment *unwarrantably* exercised on the animal creation; proceeding from, I must suppose, either a total ignorance of, or a careless inattention to their origin and nature: which leads me to pursue my subject.

Sect. 24. THE angelic and human *soul* or *spirit*, from their concomitant origin and nature, appearing to be

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most obviously one and the same *being*; it remains next to see whether *that* of the Brute can be separated from them, without hoodwinking our *Reason*.—The Man who, upon a cool and impartial survey of himself with the brute creation, can conclude he himself has a soul to be saved, and that the Brute has not; has indeed founded his opinion on most superficial crude reasoning and observation;—unsupported as before remarked* with either facts, reason, or philosophy, and in arraignment of God's justice and mercy;—their intellectual powers cannot be controverted by Man without wilful blindness and obstinacy; when with the most

* See Sect. 12 and 15.

most transient view, he may trace a *reflection*, *policy*, and *sagacity*, in some of their tribes, that transcends many stupid beings of his own species, who labour not even under the character of insanity or idiotism.—

When Man, from the weakness of pride and arrogance, imagines himself degraded by a comparison with the Brute, he egregiously errs; and when we reflect on the common *per-
version* of Man's superior intellectual qualities, the Brute seems rather injured in the similitude;—he is, like Man himself, compounded of *spirit* and *body*, and the near general resemblance in the exterior, as well as interior construction of their corporeal forms to that of Mankind (some of

their tribes bearing a likeness even in feature and countenance) marks the near relation between them : it is true, God has graciously vouchsafed to endow Man with more extended powers of exerting his rational faculties, by, we must suppose, some variations of a peculiar nature in the mechanism of his brain, and other parts of his nervous system, imperceptible to the most acute observer; by means of which his *original free agency* is restored to him, and his spiritual principles acquire greater scope and latitude for unlimited action, becoming thereby the more accountable being to his Creator; and this alone is the chief distinction that draws the line betwixt Man and

Brute ;

Brute; the latter being manifestly circumscribed and limited in their powers of action, and consequently less accountable beings whilst under that lowest form of degradation.

Sect. 25. IF Man is born in sin the child of wrath, and his lot of existence here, misery, toil, and trouble; what shall we say or think of that of the Brute Creation, who are loaded tenfold? they must have sinned likewise, they must have deserved it; but not in their present state, consequently in a prior one; otherwise we see a race of susceptible beings created and punished without the possibility of having drawn it upon themselves by any demerit

here; a supposition highly derogatory to the attributes of a good God;—the result is plain, and their creation and lot of existence can only be accounted for, upon the same cause and principle, of the creation of Man.—*The brutal, human, and angelic soul or spirit is ONE*,—The Cœlestial Apostate Angels being banished from the heavenly regions for their disobedience and ingratitude to their beneficent Creator;* the material universe was formed by him, as a place of punishment and probation; scattered through the various planetary systems, doomed to animate and move within the limits of different material forms or prisons, and

* See Sect. 14th.

and as these are by time, or accidental violence, divested of their mechanical powers; the offending spirit flies by the particular designation of God, and takes possession of *another form*, prepared for his reception; until at length, by peculiar grace and favour, he is permitted to enter and animate the *human*; under which form, his original Angelic Powers are restored, and an opportunity given to obtain his Creator's pardon for his primitive transgression; if this is not the case, say ye moralists, divines, and philosophers, what is Man, what is Brute, what is this world, and why, and for what purpose were they all brought into being?—This solution constitutes the most ancient doctrines of
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the Metempsychosis, universally professed and believed by the first inhabitants of the earth; doctrines! which can only justify * the ways of God to Men, and amply reconcile the seeming contradiction between his works and his attributes, in the creation of any susceptible beings at all, (as Man and Brute are,) doomed to misery: and this doctrine also refutes the conception of taking in a *literal* sense, the history which that ancient philosopher and law-giver Moses gives of the *fall of Man*, which was so obviously intended to be understood as *Typical* only of the *Angelic* fall, or Apostacy.

Sect.

* See Sect. 6th.

SECT. 26. IN the primitive times, by which I mean, the period when the delinquent spirits were driven to take possession of this material globe; it is rational to think *one* universal faith and worship of the Deity prevailed, by which they were to be restored to his favour; because that system of faith and morals necessary for the salvation of ONE, must have been equally essential for ALL:—how that *saving system* came to be lost, cannot now be traced; therefore all that is left for a contemplative man anxious for his soul's future welfare, is, to endeavour (by an humble consideration of the attributes of his maker and his own state) to acquire a rational idea of *what nature that saving*

ving law was;—it must have been plain, free from mystery, and suited to every capacity and understanding; for every individual had an important interest *therein*; its precepts, its injunctions, its prohibitions, could not carry doubtful meanings, or bear double interpretations; these are preliminaries, without which, it could not have been received as any religious law at all, consistent with the divine rules of distributive justice.

Sect. 27. It is natural to suppose, that about the time *that* universal saving faith was lost to mankind, many spurious religious systems took its place, amongst all the nations of the earth;

earth; all pretending to *divine origin* without any of its true signatures or resemblance; hence it was, that mysteries and monstrous tenets, incomprehensible and unintelligible even to God himself, (if I may be pardoned the expression) were obtruded, as necessary to salvation:—Man with his primitive religion also lost his virtue, and some of the more crafty, working upon the fears, ignorance, and superstition of the multitude, entered into a confederacy; laid claim to divinity, and set themselves up as guardians of religion and defenders of its rights, although of their own invention; thus religion became subservient to the interested views of Pride, Avarice, Ambition, and an im-

immoderate *new kind of thirst of Power* over the spirituals and temporals of every community; the minds of the bulk of Mankind became enervated, shackled, and bewildered, following, in different sects and parties, every *ignis fatuus* who held out a false light to mislead them; and thus in process of time, pure theology and true virtue were banished from the world, or at least confined to the breasts of very few individuals, who have appeared in every age and nation, *as prodigies* to be gazed at, not imitated; and in this wise the gracious destination of the delinquent spirits state of probation is frustrated and proves abortive of our benevolent Creator's intention; and
 here

here we still justly remain objects of his displeasure and monuments of our own infatuated folly.—Severe as the foregoing animadversions may appear *to some*, as bearing the complexion of *invective*, they are in truth only a lamentable detail of facts, verified by the Ecclesiastical History of all states and people; it being notorious that, from the first known ages to the present, the sacerdotal order of men have been, and still are, the enslavers of the mind of Man, and subverters of pure religion, *with very few exceptions*.—I proceed next to the melancholy contemplation of my Third General Head,

C H A P. III.

Of FAITH and WORSHIP.

Sect. I. **A**S it appears, there has been no universal and uncontroverted rule or standard of religious Faith and Worship within our records of time, it may be justly said, that the apostate spirits have been for a series of ages exploring their way to salvation *in the dark*; no wonder then, they have missed the road: therefore, the most likely means (as before remarked) to elucidate their paths are, by due reflection and conclusions on the attributes of God and their own condition, to try if it is not possible

possible from thence to recover the right track.—God is just, he is merciful—he created us from benevolent motives, and hateth nothing he has made—we offended him by disobedience and ingratitude, for which he justly banished us his presence, and consigned us to certain punishments; graciously leaving it still in our power to retrieve our lost state and his favor: now the question is, what kind of satisfaction God requires of us to accomplish those great ends?—We may rationally suppose such as the following:—1st, A deep sense of our crime, and sorrow and repentance for having offended; a repentance that includes not only our original angelic apostacy, but the transgressions also

of our present state of *trial*.—2d, A determination to offend no more, either in the *one*, or *other* instance.—3d, Our sorrow and repentance to be evinced by sentiments and actions, not by words alone.—4th, A due adoration to GOD ALONE.—5th, A mode of Faith and Worship consistent with, and not derogatory to his divine attributes and supremacy.—6th, An unbounded love and charity to each other, and to our fellow sufferers and delinquents of the brute creation.—And, 7thly and lastly, A due reverence for those divine spirits, who have appeared in the world under the human form and denomination of Prophets, Sages, and Legislators; whether arising from
from

from amongst our apostate selves, or delegated from *above* by God, for the instruction of us unhappy criminals *below*;---but this veneration or regard is not to be paid indiscriminately to *all*, for false prophets have arisen amongst us in all ages; but to those whose *lives* and *pure example*, concurring with the *doctrine* they preached, mark them of divine origin, by the full conviction they work upon our reason and our conscience; our own feelings being the surest monitor, and the best criterion to prove their authenticity.——Instances of this kind we apprehend have been *but few*, if more than *one*.

Sect. 2. SOMETHING analogous to the foregoing, we may conceive,

were the conditions of our restoration to God's favour, and constituted the *universal creed* of Mankind; they were plain and simple, and consistent with justice, reason, and the nature of things, respecting our Creator and ourselves; and in truth they were so obvious and self-evidently necessary, that it is the most astonishing phenomenon in nature, that a race of conscious apostate beings should ever lose sight of them, and in their stead substitute, by principle and practice, modes of Faith and Worship diametrically opposite thereto! in violation of their duty to God, and their own present and future felicity; but such have been the fruits of the false wisdom and philosophy of
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of Man! various instances of which I will proceed to enumerate, from the common perversion of genuine Faith and Worship; first premising, that the Apostate Spirits which animate the brute creation, are exempt from consideration under the head of *Faith*, the subject of my present contemplation; as their state of existence seems marked, a lot of chastisement only and of lowest reprobation, religious duties or worship do not appear to be expected from them, whilst under *those limited forms*, nor until by particular grace of their Creator, they rise to animate the *human*, which seems to be the only *probationary* term allowed to the Apostate Spirits.

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Sect. 3. THE most general, capital, and fatal error of Mankind is, giving that Faith, Worship, and Adoration to other beings, which alone belong to God; this is a transgression little inferior to their *first* apostasy, and indeed may justly be termed a second; and we may presume to say, keeps the soul out of the train of salvation, and will so in perpetuity, unless corrected.—In this gross system of Idolatry are almost all the people of the earth immersed, differing only in degree, as will appear from an analysis of their religious tenets; the plea or salvo, commonly made use of to extenuate this practice; to wit, that they have always a *reservation ultimately* to God,
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in the worship they pay to *Idols*, will stand them in very little stead; because every *semblance* of the kind is not only highly impious in itself, but speaks a doubt and want of a proper confidence in God himself: This ancient error has been improved upon by the moderns, who make a profitable trade of the commonality, by enjoining worship and adoration to the spirits of *departed saints* as they are termed; the imposition and fallacy of which shall be deservedly exposed under my next general head.

Sect. 4. ANOTHER species of Idolatry, and perversion of genuine Faith, is *Polytheism*, or worship paid to many Gods; in violation of the
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Unity of the God-head, the most essential article of the *primitive creed*,* dictated by God himself to mankind; this also is a most fatal error of very great antiquity, which with most deep concern I observe has descended to later times, and constitutes the religion of many nations, (to it is much to be feared, the perdition of their souls; as a conception so gross, so offensive and debasing, to the dignity and supremacy of our God and Creator, can be hardly admissible to pardon.

Sect. 5. THERE are some infatuated people in the world, who have formed themselves into a Sect, and who

* See Sect. 1.

who build their hopes of salvation upon the fallacious foundation of implicit Faith, *without works*; these think as inconsistently as a man who should expect to gain the prize in the race by sitting still; these unhappy spirits have generally been through their lives atrocious sinners, and their false teachers, working upon their despair, excite in them an enthusiastic unavailing dependance on *Faith alone*; this is another breach of the *primitive creed*.

Sect. 6. OTHERS, no less infatuated than the foregoing, judging of their God as they do of a frail earthly Monarch, think a friend at Court will do their business of salvation,
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and fix their sole dependance on the mediation of a *Third Being*; and, not believing themselves quite secure here, conclude it necessary to engage also the whole bodies of the Saints and Angels in their service; this is another dangerous species of Idolatry and breach of the *primitive creed*. —God having endowed every intelligent being with a sufficient portion of his divine reason and spirit, to fulfil every duty of their creation, or state of existence; with ample powers of *their own*, either to persevere in obedience, or when offending, to regain their lost state, the mediation of a *third* or more *persons*, must be not only inefficacious, but offensive to God, as it supposes him

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a partial Deity; and that justice is not his rule of action; the failure in our duty proceeds not from the want of powers *within ourselves* to do what he requires of us, but in the *non-exertion* of those powers; for God is just, and cannot demand of us more than we can perform; when we petition him for mercy and forgiveness, or any other blessing from his Providence, "*for the sake of any other being,*" our prayers are highly offensive;—God will only grant for *ours*, or for *his mercy's sake*; he is not subject to the weakness and failings of us mortals, he governs not by the influence or *intercession* of favourites or ministers, but by his sole, active, universal power; and

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will not brook a division of his omnipotence or attributes, with any other *created being* whatsoever.—When our dependance for pardon or other blessings, rests on any being but God himself, we fatally deceive ourselves; it is true he is the God of Justice, but he is also the God of *Mercy*; he knows when any palliating or extenuating circumstances, move in our behalf; and will not fail exerting that benign and healing attribute, to those, *who put their trust in HIM ALONE.*

Sect. 7. EQUALLY fatal and incongruous is the conception, that the sufferings and good works of *one being* can atone for the *sins* and bad works

works of *another* : this is also a very *antient* dangerous soothing error, unhappily adopted by the *moderns* ; and is a perversion of genuine faith, so contrary to the nature of things, and the very idea of distributive justice, that it is inconceivable upon what foundation, such a preposterous *tenet* took its rise ! for it has neither *reason* or true religion for its support.—When we observe, from the strongest presumptive proofs, a *being*, *delegated* by GOD, in compassion to our infirmities, and to correct our errors, condescending to take our form upon him ; declaring the will of *his* and *our* God and Father, in *doctrines* that strike the heart with full conviction of their *divine origin*,

and in perfect conformity to the *primitive* injunctions, and terms of restoration dictated by God to the apostate spirits; and when we see *the same being*, in support and confirmation of the truth of the principles he preached, sealing them with many sufferings, and at last with his blood and death; having previously exhibited, through the course of his existence under the *human form*, such an immaculate example, as no mortal could ever imitate or lay claim to; no longer can the Divinity of *such a being* be doubted;—and to such a being, all *due* laud and reverence be given! But then—to suppose his sufferings and death can *atone*, or be a *propitiation* for *our sins*, is a degree of

of self-flattery, little less than fascination; and has lulled more souls into a *perilous* sleep, than any other cause whatsoever: his sufferings and death can be only efficacious to us, inasmuch as we adhere to his doctrines in principle and practice, and copy his great example, as nearly as our depraved natures will enable us; in this sense he becomes *our redeemer*; but in no other.—When we address the Deity “through such a being,” meaning only through the efficacy of his example, doctrines, and promises, we pray with propriety; but if we have any meaning, or reliance beyond it, we assuredly err.

SECT. 8. THERE is a Sect of people in the world, whom we may stile Men of *great Faith*; these believe themselves the *chosen* of God from the beginning, and therefore may perpetrate crimes of the blackest die with impunity, as their election is sure at the last.—A branch of this sect believe every act and incident of human life was *predestined* and *unavoidable*; thereby, making God the sole author of all evil; and Man, as mere and *unaccountable* a machine as the watch in his pocket; destroying the very essence and principle of *Free Agency*. Men firmly rooted in these diabolical persuasions, sin boldly; being under no controul of conscience, and are
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always ready to overturn empires, or to go as their evil impulse drives them: lamentable is the state of men of this stamp; their tenets are so gross, absurd, and offensive to purity of faith; it puts them beyond the reach of Reason or primitive Religion. Thus it is, when mankind lose sight of the right track, there is no end to their errors.

Sect. 8. THE last instance I shall take notice of, as a perversion of pure faith, is afforded by a misguided race of people, who, influenced by their false and interested teachers, conceit themselves possessed, by the peculiar *inspiration* of God, with an extraordinary portion of his divine essence;

essence; altho' it produces nothing but a *spiritual Pride*. These beings, are real objects of commiseration, as they are not so dangerous to the peace of society, as the last mentioned sect, and are no one's enemy but *their own*; this unhappy prepossession leads its votaries to spurn at the humble means to salvation, and raises too frequently a phrenzy in the mind, that terminates in daring violence to its own existence.

Sect. 10. THERE is an *error*, too common amongst mankind, which calls for censure, the more especially as it has the sanction of established communities in religious worship, to confirm it; and that is, petitioning
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the Deity for “an additional portion
 “ of his *spiritual grace*, to enable us
 “ to perform our duty to him and
 “ ourselves,” which implies a deficiency, or imperfection in his creative attribute, from whose hands nothing could possibly issue, but in plenitude of perfection, for every intent and purpose of its creation; therefore to pray for superabundant spiritual grace is, in truth, desiring God would mend his work by an act of supererogation; which must be displeasing to him and useless to ourselves; for God knows, and we should know if we thought properly, that when he made us, he endowed us (as before remarked) with a *necessary* portion of his divine spirit; if
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we make a good use of that, *we want no more*; if we do not, *we deserve no more*; and to ask it, is inconsiderate, if not arrogant: we may be *spend-thrifts* in spirituals as well as temporals; and as we make ourselves no just objects of pity *to the world* in the *one case*; what reason have we to expect we should be so, to God, *in the other*? God may for the promotion of his *own wise purposes*, sometimes by immediate inspiration, or a more happy disposition of the human frame, illumine and enlarge the intellectual powers of *individuals*, but an additional portion of his *divine grace*, we have no right to expect.—Equally absurd, is our praying to God to protect us, from the power of the arch
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rebel Satan; he has no power, but what we ourselves give him; and where a voluntary allegiance and submission is paid, it is arrogant to expect God will interpose any supernatural shield between us, when the means of resistance is in our own power.

Sect. II. ON the whole, a benevolent mind cannot help deploring the fatal tendency of all the foregoing Errors; as it is deeply to be apprehended, they render our devotions, and daily worship, of none effect; when both the one, and the other, are crudely conceived and improperly addressed; why a *general reform* of these obvious and impious incongruities

ities hath been so long a stranger to the *hearts* of those, in whose *hands* the remedy lies, let the elders of every established church or religious persuasion in the world shudder to think of. The cause of this general neglect, in a matter of such moment to our present as well as future happiness, is but too manifest; those whose more immediate concern it is, are so much engaged in the enjoyments of *Temporals*, they have not *leisure* to bestow a thought on *Spirituals*; no wonder then, that the laity should follow the example of their pastoral leaders, and content themselves with the exterior forms of religion, without feeling its spirit or essence; but vain and futile

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is the pomp and pageantry of worship, if the sentiments and adoration they ought to convey to the throne of Mercy, are utterly unworthy the great and SUPREME BEING, they are so superficially addressed to.

Sect. 12. ON the important article of *Prayer*, mankind have from the beginning differed no less widely in matter and form, than in every other tenet of religion; some contending, that prayer is not necessary at all; others, that we cannot pray too much; some, adhering to set forms of prayer; others, disavowing the practice; all these think and act in extremes, and may be easily reconciled: but in one circumstance they all concur, namely,

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the propriety of setting apart some consecrated place for public prayer and worship; and yet it does not appear that this was the case, before the period that the priesthood gained a universal ascendancy over the minds of the bulk of the people; sacred and profitable endowments and stipends, were the natural and obvious consequences; which, let them enjoy in peace, provided they enjoy them in the name of that God they preach, in dispensing their superfluities, in feeding the hungry, and clothing the naked; and by making a more equal dividend of their immense possessions amongst their own needy and distressed brethren.

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Sect. 13. IT is strange that people who *profess* one faith in essentials, should differ touching the practice of speculative non-essentials, which cannot in themselves, either absolutely or relatively, affect their salvation; but it is still more astonishing, that these trifling disagreements should excite to animosity, hatred, persecution, and murder, *for God's sake*, as the partizans of each opinion impiously pretend; yet such is, and such has been for many centuries back, the lamentable state of those sects of people who stile themselves *Christians*, although their practice is in all points repugnant to, and in open violation of every precept enjoined by their divine preacher, the

cœlestial Ambassador of *Peace, Love,*
 and *Charity*.—It may be said indeed,
 that these violences do not rage in
 the present times, in the degree they
 did heretofore : granted ; but this
 does not seem to proceed from the
 professors being better Christians,
 but rather from a general *indifference*,
 if not *contempt* for any religion at
 all. Another cause may have contri-
 buted to this quiescent state, a-
 mongst these sects, in the latter times ;
 namely, the temporal rights, emolu-
 ments, and immunities, of the church
 and priesthood throughout all Christ-
 endom, (the great object which ex-
 cited those unchristian contentions)
 being well fenced and secured ; spi-
 rituals, except in exterior forms as
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before remarked, became a matter of no concern.—Is it not then much to be apprehended, that prayer and worship, from beings so circumstanced and so actuated, will be justly deemed the highest insult that can be offered to their God and Creator?—It is surely no less than a *daring farce* of Religion, whose catastrophe must be deeply *Tragical*.——I select these sects from the rest of mankind, for the subject of my meditations on this article of prayer; because, in conformity to the primitive creed, they have been supremely blessed by the Deity, with the purest system of Ethics and Theology, that was ever revealed to the Apostate Spirits.—If *much* will be required, from
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those to whom *much* is given, lamentable indeed is the state of these pretenders to Christianity ; surely much more tolerable is the state of the unenlightened Heathen, whose errors will have some claim to Mercy and Forgiveness.

Sect. 14. To the above-mentioned general indifference and contempt for true religion, in the dignified elders of every communion, may be ascribed that strange hodge-podge of religious prayer and worship, which has so long constituted the liturgies of every established church of the different sects of Christians ; where beings congregate to confound each other ; where the Mosaic and Christian doctrines

doctrines are unnaturally shook and jumbled together, like vinegar and oil, without a possibility of ever bringing them to a perfect union;—although Christ sometimes proves the authenticity of his own divine mission, by allusions to the Old Testament; he no where directs or even intimates, that that book should constitute any part of Christian worship; battle, murder, and the destruction of the species, are the avowed scheme of the Mosaic system; and peace, charity, and forbearance, the foundation stone of the Christian.—The ceremonials of the Jewish Law, the historical parts of the Old Testament, with the unchristian rhapsodical bitter curses and execrations,

tions of David, which never should have found entrance within the doors of a Christian Church, are all made parts of divine worship; and to the reproach of common sense, taught to be necessary to salvation ; and various parts of each, rehearsed in the course of the year, which shock the ears of modesty and decency.—What in the name of God, have the Christians to do with the daily recital of the transactions of a race of people, who, with very few exceptions, proved aliens to their God, and a disgrace to human nature? Was it intended, that we should be half Jew and half Christian? surely not; then why are these things so? and, why are they not amended?—But shocking
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ing as this solecism of blending the Mosaic and Christian system in the Christian Liturgy is, it must be still more reprehensible and offensive to the Deity, daily to hear offered up to him in our prayers, tenets, which blasphemously impeach the *unity* of his godhead; and petitions stuffed with inconsistencies, and needless worrying tautologies.——Christ interdicted *long prayers*, as an abomination in the hypocritical Pharisees; and constructed a perfect, but *short* and *comprehensive* model for his disciples to follow. How little veneration or regard has been paid to his prohibition, by his modern disciples, appears from their liturgies; what is called *the reformed Protestant*
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established Church of these kingdoms, superior as it certainly is to all other Christian Sects, remains yet greatly imperfect, and its liturgy loaded with many useless incumbrances, that have long called aloud for being lopped off and pruned to the pure word of God, if any fruit pleasing and acceptable to him is expected from it; the new modelled Liturgy lately published on Doctor Clark's plan is a pious, but *timid* and *partial* attempt; but as the plan and execution were the productions of Churchmen, nothing better could be expected; for although their spirits appear piously bold and daring, yet they moved in trammels; and could not, consistently with their sacerdotal

tal characters, attempt to rub off *a* once, all the rust, which the pure doctrines of Christ had contracted from the inventions of interested men, at different periods, since the demise of its divine Author.

Sect. 15. IT may be laid down as a certain and incontestable truth, confirmed by acute observation on the unhappy bent of the human mind, that the *cause* in the first instance, why there appears so little true harmony, brotherly love and unanimity amongst the inhabitants of every city, town, and hamlet in Christendom is, the want of one uniform mode of Prayer and Worship; that is, in other words, one universal

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national Liturgy. The experience of all times has proved, that force and persecution have always and ever will fail, in obtaining so desirable and necessary an end ; but the mind of Man is always open to conviction, when operated on by *reason* and *propriety* ; and there is a most prevalent reason, which should excite all to wish for such a *uniform Liturgy*, to wit, that whilst *one* sect of Christians look down with contempt and detestation on *another*, (the invariable effect of religious schisms) the prayers of *neither* can be possibly pleasing to that being, who has commanded universal love and forbearance towards each other. — *True Religion*, when stripped of the *mysterious*

rious trappings with which *enthusiastic* and *designing* men have covered and obscured it, will appear plain, simple, uniform, and comprehensive, to every understanding;---and the divesting it of these *false trappings* and *incomprehensibles*, must be the primary step and groundwork for a universal Liturgy; to which no sect of *Christians* can with *reason*, or even a shew of reason, urge any solid objection.

Sect. 16. LET not any tender conscience be startled when it is advanced, that, to make, what is called the reformed Protestant established church of these kingdoms, a perfect church and model for the great end

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proposed, nineteen parts at least in twenty of its liturgy must be abolished, to reduce it to the standard of *reason* or *common sense*, to insure its being acceptable to that Being, who is the great object of our worship, and to make it heartily embraced by *any* rational thinking Mortal.---Imprimis, All *Mystery*, or even the semblance of mystery, must be expunged; as being utterly incongruous with the spirit of any true religion.---2dly, Every expression and sentiment, which carries the remotest tendency of impeaching the supremacy and unity of the God-Head, should be carefully suppressed, as the highest species of impiety Mankind can be guilty of.---3dly, *Creeds*, of
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whatsoever denomination, should no longer hold a place in the liturgy; some *test* of this kind might have been necessary in the early days of christianity; but in *avowed* christian kingdoms, they are to every intent and purpose useless; in all times they proved the bane of christian union, and only serve to keep ancient animosities still alive. 4thly, All fasts and festivals for the commemoration of departed Apostles, Saints, and Martyrs as they are called, with the service appointed for the Powder Plot, Restoration, &c. should be abolished, and none retained in the liturgy, but those which are strictly relative to *Christ alone*; as the others only tend to multiply holidays and idleness,

ness, and keep up old feuds and parties; load the daily service of the Church with non-essential lumber, which cannot in any sense relate to, or contribute to our salvation. 5thly, No portions of the Old Testament should constitute any part of the Christian Liturgy, except the Decalogue, and those sublime rhapsodies which may easily be garbled from the Psalms of David, in support of the Supremacy and Unity of God;---otherwise *incest, polygamy, and concubinage*, may abound in the land, under a *seeming sanction*. 6thly, All articles, homilies, and subscription tests, which are merely the inventions of human superstition, or of designing men, should be removed; and

and no test or restriction be deemed necessary, but subscription to the Gospel of Christ, that a free door to unanimity may be opened; for a *Christian Church*, no more than a *House*, can be properly said to *stand*, when it is divided against itself. 7thly, The inordinate harangues of tedious prayer, with which the common prayer-book is most egregiously stuffed, should be shortened in number, matter, and form; for Heaven can no more be won by vociferous violence of prayer than of song. If set forms of prayer be deemed necessary for the sake of preventing confusion in a congregation, they should be few, and free from those perpetual repetitions of the present liturgy,

which seem calculated to no other end, than to fate and tire the priest and people and harrafs the Deity. In our petitions, except on some sudden and *special* calamitous exigency, we should strictly confine ourselves to *generals*, leaving *particulars* to God, who alone knows what is best for us; it is upon this just principle, that the service of the litany should stand condemned and erased from a rational liturgy. Although mental, that is, silent prayer, dictated by true spiritual grace, may possibly be more acceptable, yet set forms need not prove a stumbling block, that should prevent the union of any really pious dissenter, because he has the reserve of mental prayer always in his power.

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Set forms of prayer may with great propriety be reduced to *four*.---A warm and devout confession of all our sins, but more especially our angelic apostacy.---A petition for mercy and pardon.---A thanksgiving for all God's mercies and blessings.---A general address for the continuance of his Providence to us and all created beings.---It requires only to add, the lessons should be taken from the gospels, and *proper psalms* selected for the daily service; and the rest struck out of the common Prayer-Book; the portions appointed for the communion, baptism, matrimony, and the burial of the dead, should be revised and shortened, at least half in half; and no set forms of prayer for the
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visitation of the sick should be retained, as these should naturally arise from the peculiar situation and circumstances of the diseased, at the discretion of the minister.—In framing a new and universal *Christian Liturgy*, which will be first properly so called; the utmost precaution should be used to avoid, both in sentiment and expression, the manifold dangerous errors, respecting God and ourselves, pointed out from the 3d to the 10th section inclusive of this chapter; a Liturgy formed with judgment on the foregoing outlines, would be consistent with *itself*, consistent with *reason* and *common sense*, and consequently acceptable to God; and against which no Christian of common

common reason or sense, could possibly refuse subscribing.---The subaltern Clergy, on whom (with shame be it spoken) rests the burden of the day, would be relieved from the tedious pageantry of prayer and worship, through which they sweat with piteous labour of body as well as of mind; for if they are blessed with understanding, they must condemn, and disbelieve, or look down with contempt on, more than the half they are obliged to read; and of course they cannot feel the devotion they ought in so sacred an office, nor excite it in their congregations; and consequently, their worship is thereby rendered of *none effect*. What must be the case then, when they have
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more than one church to serve? which is too frequently the case; for a gratuity or stipend inferior to the income of the meanest bailiff [amongst their parishioners: in such a situation, it is easy to conceive how the service of God must be scampered over, for the support of a wretched and numerous family. Now, as the shares of the *loaves* and *fishes*, which fall to these miserable subalterns, do not amount to more than a hard crust of the one, and the head, tail, and bones of the other; the least their pampered brethren and superiors can do for them is, to lighten their load, by shortening their portion of unprofitable and unnecessary duty, for their sake as well

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as God's, by labouring to promote a rational short Liturgy, which will *cost them nothing* but a little thought (their temporalities untouched) to methodise the same, from the outlines ready sketched out to their hands; --- by such a reform, the yoke of their subalterns will be rendered *easy*, and their burdens *light*, in more senses than one; their daily duty will become a rational, a pleasing *exercise* of their intellectual powers; in place of being, as it now is and must be, a laborious and irksome *task*; they would execute it with reverence, spirit, and devotion, knowing it was more acceptable to their God, and more salutary to the souls committed to their charge; and they would
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be enabled, with propriety and decorum, to serve more churches than one.—But when in the pulpit, they should be prohibited torturing their faculties in attempting to explain certain speculative points in divinity, which neither themselves believe, nor their congregations understand; and be confined to the enforcing moral duties, from texts only taken from the dictates of Christ, as recorded in the Four Evangelists.

Sect. 17. THE Author of these meditations has not put them on paper, from a vain affectation of singularity, but from the deepest reverence to his God and Creator, and perfect love for Mankind and every created

created being ; he has marked out a *foundation* for union, and for *pure* prayer and worship, which only he conceives can be worthy the Deity and serviceable to his creatures ; the erecting and forming the *superstructure*, he consigns to the dignified heads of the church, in conjunction with the supreme legislature of these kingdoms, whom God direct. *Amen.*

A short, but comprehensive CHRISTIAN PRAYER.

O ETERNAL ONE, with a grateful, penitent, and obedient heart, I look up, through the pure doctrines of JESUS CHRIST, to thy *mercy* and *providence*.——For weak minds, who may think more words and more sentiments

timents necessary, it may be paraphrased in manner following:—

O ETERNAL ONE, with a most grateful heart, for all thy mercies, all thy blessings, of which we implore thy gracious continuance;---with the deepest sorrow and repentance, for having offended against thy holy laws;---and with perfect resignation to thy divine will;—we most humbly look up, through the pure doctrines of JESUS CHRIST, to thy mercy and providence; beseeching thee to pardon all our transgressions, but more especially, our great, our *original sin*, our angelic apostacy.

CHAP. IV.

Of a FUTURE STATE.

Section I. **B**EFORE we enter on the discussion of this general head, it is necessary, by way of introduction, to form a few humble conceptions on the Almighty's scheme of creation, so far as regards ourselves, as inhabitants of this portion of formed matter;—it is most probable, that the Deity constructed it in such wise, that by continued revolutions or rotations, it should last for a *determinate* space of time;

subject to such changes, as he should be pleased at different periods to impress upon it; for according to the general conception of the wisest amongst mankind, this globe was in its pristine state a much more delightful, comfortable, and salubrious habitation, than it exhibits at present, owing to a *second defection* of the apostate spirits, during their state of probation here; by which they rendered themselves unworthy of the beauty and convenience, that was at first graciously given to them by God.——It is no less probable, that the space allotted for the duration of this globe is also the *term fixt* by God for our banishment, punishment, and probation, during which
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we are doomed to migrate from one mortal form to another, according to the most ancient Metempsychosian doctrine. Lastly, it is more than probable, that at the expiration of the term of duration of this planet, God will receive those apostate spirits into grace and favor, who, by a just application of their intellectual powers under the human form, *have benefited of his indulgence*; and those who *have not* will be doomed to perpetual banishment in some direful region prepared for that purpose; and this period may be called the consummation of all things, relative to Angel, Man, and Brute; when the form of this globe will be broken, and its various parts be reduced

to its original *Chaos*; *as no longer necessary*.—What has been said above may, for ought we know to the contrary, be equally applicable to every other planet or region of the material universe.—When the period of dissolution is to take place, rests *alone* with God;—it may be to-night,—to-morrow,—or the next day,—it may be prolonged to distant ages; altho' the aspect of our globe bears such visible marks of decay, as should stimulate our apprehensions to a necessary and speedy preparation for the dire and *ultimate* event. Now to pursue my subject:

Sect. 2. THE future state of the soul or spirit's existence after death,

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or its separation from its corrupt and mortal prison,---is a subject that has employed the thoughts and pens of the learned from the earliest records of time; sorry am I to think and say, I fear to very little purpose, estimating the effects their doctrines have worked upon mankind throughout all ages; nor is it at all to be wondered at, whilst the sentiments and dictates of philosophers and sages are diametrically opposite to each other, in a matter so essential to us; bewildering the mind in place of enlightening it;—some utterly denying the spirit's immortality, or its future existence; others asserting both, and also that such future state is a state of rewards and punishment: this
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last is the most generally adopted principle, although mankind differ widely in sentiment, touching the mode of such existence, as well as in the nature and period of the spirit's rewards and punishments: some believing it subject to the one or the other, immediately at its separation from the body; others contending, that both are deferred until the final issue of all things; which is usually termed *the day of judgment*. The former seems to have been the opinion of antiquity and the eastern sages, followers of the Metempsychosis; the latter, the doctrine of the moderns, and chiefly the christian sects of every denomination; who in this principle *only* seem unanimous:

mous: Strong objections lie against both, to be presently enumerated.

SECT. 3. THOSE who deny the immortality of the soul and a future state, are, I conceive, in the present age, few in number, if any; for howsoever the general conduct and morals of mankind seem to indicate no faith in the one or the other, yet they are not hardy enough to avow it; and at the period of separation, the conscious offending spirit becomes too late and but too sensible of its real state and nature; therefore the principle itself appears unworthy a particular refutation: it remains then only for a thinking being, anxious for his state, to weigh

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by the standard of unbiaſſed reaſon the claiſhing opinions of learned *believers* ; and try to find a *medium hypothesis*, that may clearly reconcile all parties, and further juſtify the ways of God to *Man*.

Sect. 4. If we adhere to the opinion of the ancients, and ſuppoſe the ſoul or ſpirit receives its reward or puniſhment, at the inſtant of its ſeparation from the body, ſuch reward or puniſhment cannot be *final*, but *temporary* only, and not its ultimate ſentence, for theſe manifeſt reaſons ;—(*taking it for granted, that every organised body was created and formed as receptacles for the apoſtate ſpirits* ; for otherwiſe, they are moſt
affuredly

assuredly, *unaccountables in nature*)
 —Now if the soul receives its *final*
doom at its separation, a perpetual di-
 minution of these organised bodies
 must ensue, of every species, from
 the human form to the elephant or
 the emmet, as being utterly useless
 after the exit of the spirit; for what
 need for the *cage*, when the *bird* is
 flown in *perpetuity*? But daily obser-
 vation shews the reverse; we see no
 decrease or diminution in any of
 their tribes; but they are still pro-
 pagated, and continue in nearly the
 same proportion by generation, as
 from the beginning, for the same
 wonderful purposes; as the one or-
 ganised form, from its natural princi-
 ples, perishes, the spirit or soul which
 animated

animated it, is outed of its present receptacle, it flies not, in *perpetuity*, but from that body; and by the invariable scheme of providence, another *cage* or habitation is provided for it; consequently and obviously death, or the separation of soul and body, is not the period of the soul's *final doom*.—The proud philosopher will probably knit his supercilious brow, and the celebrated toast raise her indignant crest, at seeing the *human form divine* thus debased, by being indiscriminately classed with the common herds of brutality, and the lowest insects and reptiles, and spurn at the author of such degrading sentiments;—if this proves offensive, let the argument be confined to

to their own *form divine*; the dignity of human nature, they are ready enough to allow, arises only from the divine spirit which animates their form; now let them philosophically or rationally account for the *perpetual succession* of these *human* forms, if the period of death is the period of the soul's *final* sentence.

Sect. 5. IF, with the moderns, we should conceive, that the sentence on the spirit is delayed to the day of *final judgment*, a multitude of difficulties start up to oppose our full belief; --- what becomes of it during the intermediate space of time? it cannot, from its nature, when released from matter, lye torpid and
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inactive; it must exist somewhere, and somehow;—if it has during its abode in the flesh made an ill use of its powers, and deserved *punishment*, it is not rational to conceive it would be *so long* delayed;—if on the contrary, it has during that abode merited *reward*, it is equally irrational to suppose its creator and judge would postpone it, for *God is just*.—To some, it may appear a matter of no importance, whether the soul receives its doom immediately at its exit, or at a long future period; but it ought not to appear in that indifferent light; for whichever of the foregoing opinions a man adopts, the conduct of his present existence will most certainly be influenced thereby, as will further appear as we advance.

Sect. 6. To reconcile these jarring opinions of *the wise*, which confounds the understanding of *the weak*, and seems on *either side* to impeach the justice of our creator, reason points out one only medium; namely, the supposition of *two periods of future judgment*; the one *temporary*, at the instant of the spirit's separation from its mortal appendage; the other *final*, at the consummation of all things, in the dissolution of the material world: This hypothesis is so rational, so consonant with God's justice and goodness, and so conciliatory to every appearance in nature; and withall, so glaringly manifest and self-evident, that it is most amazing it should be reserved for these days to be noted.—

This doctrine clears up many important difficulties, and opens to us a chearful view of the port of salvation, which has hitherto been darkened and obscured by gloomy doubts and perplexities.—The appearance in the world of suffering and persecuted *virtue*, and successful and triumphant *vice*, (which has led, if not drove, erring beings too frequently to suspect the equity of their Creator) philosophers and divines have endeavoured to account for, by a soothing, although a strained solution; indeed without this doctrine they can adopt no other;—to comfort the one, and restrain the other, they usually are content in a reference to the *final day of judgment*; when

when all accounts will be stated and balanced by a righteous judge; but this solution rarely affords permanent support and consolation to the *first*, and as seldom acts in terrorem to the *last*: The cause is obvious;—the periods of rewards and punishments are set at such an immensurable and uncomfortable distance of time, as leaves but a weak spur and encouragement to persevere in virtue; and as weakly strikes the vicious with dread or remorse;—but the effect in both would be extremely different, when, according to this doctrine, they advert, that the period of future judgment, rewards, and punishments, await them even in this world, at the instant the spirit is set at large

by death ; which most assuredly will be the case, if (which it would be impious to doubt) God is just.—On this ground, piety, virtue, and moral rectitude, have a firm foundation for hope and perseverance ; and vice, just cause to tremble.—Although I will not suppose the rewards, or punishments, of this state and region of probation, bear any proportion to those that will be awarded for us at the final day of judgment, yet they will doubtless be sufficient to constitute either our felicity or misery, and may rationally be deemed preparatives, or samples, of what we shall *enjoy* or *suffer* ad infinitum ; when we shall be freed *for ever* from our corrupt prisons ; and our pleasures, and our pains,

pains, will be purely spiritual and intellectual, in an inconceivable degree superior to our present feelings; as the feelings of the *mind* infinitely transcend those of the body.—Some may object, and ask, how can apparent virtue in this world suffer persecution at all, consistent with divine or even common equity? it has been answered long ago, that *apparent* virtue may cover concealed vice; for none but God can pervade the human heart, and explore its secret sins; the incongruous notion, that he permits the good to be evil intreated, merely as a trial of the extent of his faith and trust on him, is a conception most unworthy the God of justice and goodness, who will not punish with-

out adequate cause; therefore, if the *really* pious and virtuous man stands devoted to oppression, persecution, and other miseries in this life, which we have abundant reason to conclude is frequently the case; it can be no otherwise accounted for, but that during his last pre-existence under the human form, the state of uncontrolled action and freedom of will, he was guilty of making an atrocious bad use of those gracious powers; and that he is in his present state expiating those transgressions, through a series of afflictions, under the support of his inherent virtue and fortitude, with humble resignation to the decree of his just creator, and a rational dependence on a more happy lot in the next stage of mortal existence.

Sect. 7. WHEN the delinquent soul or spirit is driven from its mortal tenement, what a mighty field opens upon us for the exercise of God's justice and mercy, in this our *temporary* future state of rewards and punishments, in the distribution of our various lots, until our second and final tremendous judgment, or the consummation, takes place!—It is said, “the issues of life and death are in the hands of God,” a sentiment, that must be only relatively, and in the ultimate sense understood; for most certainly the issues of life and death rest primarily within *ourselves*, and his decrees will be governed by either our own merits or ~~deme~~rits; and as we run our course through
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the various trials he shall be pleased to grant us, under the superior form of man, so will be our final and eternal destination. Life and death, future as well as present rewards and punishments, are solely in the disposal of our Creator, and we may rely will be bestowed and inflicted according to our deserts; the space between our present probationary existence and the last judgment *may be* immense! tremendous reflection! and alternately filled, as we ourselves mark our lots, with comparative joy or misery; through the multitude of changing forms, which every offending spirit is doomed to undergo for its *cœlestial original sin or transgression*; which mankind seems so

utterly

utterly to have lost sight of, that there is but one nation of people upon the face of the earth, whose established religion has a retrospect *thereto*,* consistent with the *primitive creed* laid down to the delinquent apostate spirits in the first times.—The contrasted contingences of our present state of probationary existence are, health and sickness, power and dependance, affluence and penury, happiness and misery; but these cannot with any justice be termed the *allotments*, or necessary consequences of our existence, as they depend upon ourselves, and are the natural effects of temperance or intemperance of mind and body, and a right or wrong application

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* See Chap. 3. sect. 1. art. 1.

tion of our intellectual faculties; vain has our Creator endowed us with divine powers, when we cease to exert them to the purposes he benevolently intended. But it is time to enter into a more particular investigation, and analysis, of the state of *humanity* and of the *brute creation*; and if there are any yet, whose unwarrantable pride will not suffer them to think the latter are precisely in the same predicament with themselves, let them confine what is to be said to themselves, as it will equally be applicable to both.

Sect. 8. WHEN we take a comparative view of the different lots of the animal creation, we must be blind to
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reason, and observation, if we do not conclude, some marked with the favor of their Creator, and others laboring under his displeasure, it would be impious to suppose the Deity capable of partiality; therefore certainly each must have merited their different allotments.—Let us first take a view of the Happy and Unhappy Man; these are pictures that have been often drawn, but I think, not quite to the purpose of my present intentions.—The Happy Man is blessed with a placid disposition, free from superstition, bigotry, or spiritual pride; actuated by true piety, fulfilling every duty of his existence to God, to man, to brute; with a heart and hand ever open to relieve the ne-

cessities

cessities and miseries of his fellow creatures, under whatsoever form they are doomed to suffer; in this, he does not counteract the just decrees of God, but by his permission only alleviates the severity of them, consistent with the *primitive creed*.—He is blessed with health and affluence; a faithful wife, and bosom companion; a numerous, affectionate, obedient, and worthy progeny; a long, gracious term of probation, without diminution of his intellectual faculties;—he quits his present mortal tenement with humble resignation, in a firm, well-grounded confidence of his happy lot being continued to himself and his posterity in the next stage of their existence, under whatsoever form his

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God shall be pleased to provide for him, or them. It may be said, the foregoing is an ideal portrait, which no mortal in likeness ever came up to; we hope not so, although the instances may not be very numerous; yet I assert, at the same time, it is what every man may come up to, if he will;—let him but do as his powers enable him, and God himself will add the contingents, and prove to man, that to be *good* is to be *happy*.

Sect. 9. WE proceed next, to consider the melancholy reverse of the last felicitous lot of humanity, or the unhappy state of him, who neglects the proper application of his rational powers;—he gives the rein to his

sensual appetites, expends his youth,
 and the vigor of his life, in impious
 enjoyments and wanton dissipation;
 regardless of his duty to God, to man,
 and brute, as well as to himself; he
 is curst with a wife equally bad as
 himself, unmindful of his honor and
 his substance; and a progeny by his
 example, vicious, profligate, and dis-
 obedient; he flourishes for a while;
 but disease and penury soon overtake
 him; his disposition is soured, his
 reason distracted; he raises his hand
 against his existence, or lingers out
 his remaining span in the accumu-
 lated miseries of a loathsome prison;
 leaves his widow and descendants to
 want and dependence, and quits his
 mortal frame without any rational
 hope

hope of his lot being bettered hereafter; if doomed to animate again the human form, it will be only again to undergo variety of wretchedness; if the brutal, to suffer the rueful lot of hard labor, with many cruel stripes, inflicted on him by beings as unfeeling as he himself was, when invested with power; or it may be, sentenced to drag out his existence shut out from society in the dreary desert, or in the bosom of the gloomy forest, in some savage form, hating and hated by all, and engaged in perpetual warfare with the inhabitants of the whole earth.

Sect. 10. As God is just, such as above described, we may rationally

conclude, will be thr different lots of the completely virtuous, or completely vicious soul or spirit of man. I allow they are drawn in the extremes, and that we daily observe medium states, partaking neither of absolute happiness, or absolute misery, both in the human and brutal forms ; which we may be assured, is adjusted by the same unerring hand of providential equity as the other two extremes, in a just proportion to our deserts ; and so will be dispensed to us, through every change of existence, until the final day of judgment.—On the whole, the fallacy of some received opinions, and common practices, are by this general hypothesis fully refuted ; for instance,
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the supposition of the resurrection of the *same corrupt and mortal* body ; a gross error, which could only arise from *mis-interpretation*, a baneful root, from which many and egregious branches have sprung to overshadow the fountain of reason ; for mere matter cannot be accountable, nor susceptible of reward or punishment, which appertains solely to the conscious spirit ; and when it is said, that at the final day our corruptible bodies shall be *changed* to incorruptible, the expression can be understood only in a figurative sense, implying, that we shall then remain purely spiritual, and in precisely the same situation that every spirit is, during the intermediate period, between death
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and its animating another mortal form ;—if at the final day we have any corporeal covering at all, it must, from the nature and properties of matter, *be corruptible*.—Hence also appears the folly of those, who address their prayers and worship to *departed saints* ; and the atrocious priestcraft of those who enjoin it ; for they are imploring the mediation of beings at the throne of God, *who have no place there* ;—if misled mortals conceive there can be any efficacy in the intercession of others, it would at least be more consistent to apply to the holy host of Angelic beings, who held their allegiance firm and unshaken ;—for if God could be *influenced*, it is most probable he would be
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by them; although even that supposition favors of impiety.—This hypothesis likewise refutes the erroneous, soothing conceit at the point of death, as well as through life, that our spirit, at the dissolution of the body, shall be immediately united *for ever*, in *Heaven*, to that or those objects of our fond affections, who have departed before us; an event which *cannot* take place before the final day of judgment:—but yet, we may justly flatter ourselves with hopes, that where two souls, and two bodies, have been firmly united in the bands of virtuous love and friendship, and have otherways well deserved of their Creator through the course of their present walk of life; he will re-unite them

them in the next and following stages of their existence, under the human or some other form; and although they may be unconscious of the pre-existent union, for causes only known to God himself, it will be no abatement of our felicity; we are equally unconscious of ever having pre-existed at all; and yet it has been sufficiently proved, to every unprejudiced mind, *it must have been so.*

Sect. 11. NOR are the lots of the Brute Creation less variegated than our own, respecting happiness and misery; not from any merit or demerit of their own whilst under *that form*, but consequential to the spirits which animate them; as having
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made a right or wrong use of their unlimited powers, when last animating the *human*; this reasoning will appear more conspicuously conclusive, when we consider a little minutely the different lots of this portion of creation.—Let us view the dreary condition of the savage inhabitants of the forest, in contrast with the woolly kind, and some tribes of the feathered species, and of these, compared with other ravenous tribes of the same species; let us observe the happy state of the pampered steed, in the parks and stables of Kings, Princes, and Ministers; and then turn our humid eye to the war, the dray, the cart, the race, and the post-horse; let us compare the existence of the stag, and the

the grazing or stall-fed horned kind, with those condemned to the heavy yoke of hard labor; let us next survey the felicitous state of the domestic canine breed, entertained for our defence, or trained to murder for our sport, with the anxious, miserable, apprehensive, existence of the timorous hare or wiley fox; or the wretched condition of others of the same canine species, which infest the skirts of the capital cities of Turkey, Persia, Indostan, and Arabia, whose only horrid subsistence is carrion and dead bodies cast on the shores of the rivers; and yet so scanty is even this provision, that they are ravenous as hungry wolves, and frequently assault the traveller on his way. Respecting
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the inhabitants of the waters, they fall so little under the eye of critical observation, it is but barely a probable judgment that we can form of their state; and yet the knowledge of them, which we have acquired, enables us to conclude with some certainty, that their existence is chequered with felicity and infelicity, in like manner as those of the earth and air; although we cannot with precision mark the nature of their feelings, as it is denied us to dive into the immense profound.

Sect. 12. It may be objected, that some of the animal tribes, whose lots are marked above as happy in comparison with others, are not so

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in fact, taking in all the circumstances of their existence; that many are deprived of their natural liberty, merely to gratify our idle fancies, and wanton amusements; whilst others are fed and pampered, only to glut our sensual appetites and without any view to their happiness;—be it so, that will not alter the nature of their state; for if some of the feathered tribe are robbed of their liberty, to balance that loss, they are *free* from care; they have not the inclemency of seasons to buffet with, they have not their food to seek in frost and snow; it is provided for them by the hand of kindness, and they live, exempt from perpetual dread of the snare and assassin.—The
same

same advantages have those domestic fowl and quadrupeds, who are fed, crammed, and pampered, for our luxurious tables;* our own interest secures to them our protection and kindness; and although their date of existence may be shortened, to satisfy our lustful appetites, yet, whilst it lasts, it is rendered happy; and we go on, in the indulgence of our wanton and unnatural cravings, without any degree of apprehension of the heinous sin we commit, in cutting short the thread of life, and the term of our own probation, for such unworthy purposes:—but do we not, on the contrary, daily see some favorites, both of the feathered and quadruped

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* See Pope's Essay on Man.

draped tribes, which are neither pampered for the indulgence of our sensual appetites, nor trained for murderous mischievous sports, but entertained, loved, cherished, fed, and supported, purely for our innocent amusement, or for defence against invaders of our property, or against noxious animals, capable of molesting our peace?—I say, do we not daily see multitudes of these happy spirits, enjoying a life of un sullied innocence, and undisturbed tranquility, highly enviable of the most happy state of humanity?—Who, but God their Creator, has cast and shaped these happy lots for them?—but God is just, why then this obvious partiality? why this glaring preference?—Short-sighted

fighted mortal, look into and examine thy own breast, and if thou shalt be doomed to howl in the unso-
 ciable desert, to buffet the inclemency
 of seasons, to sustain the pangs of
 hunger and thirst, and numberless
 other natural evils, in place of being
 cherished and nurtured in the bosom
 of humanity, or blest under any other
 happy form; then be assured, that
 thou hast deserved it, by thy neglect
 or mis-application of those divine ra-
 tional powers, in the only state and
 form, under which you were enabled
 to exercise them *ad libitum*; (as be-
 fore hinted,) because,—God is just,
 and suffers not even the seeming in-
 considerable *sparrow to fall to the*
ground, without his particular atten-

tion, or, in other words, his peculiar providence.

Sect. 13. IT appears in the course of the government of this world, that God often employs or rather *permits* some human beings as instruments of his justice, to be the scourge and punishers of others; from hence, we are not to conclude, those beings so employed are particularly favored; but on the contrary, that God, knowing the vicious bent of their dispositions, marks them as the most proper executioners of his will; as the hangman amongst us is generally the most abandoned and reprobate of the people, it is more than a probable conjecture, that these instruments

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have appeared in all ages under the denomination of *heroes* and *tyrants*; whose peculiar province it has been, in conjunction with a race of followers, in disposition equal to their own, to prove themselves destroyers of mankind and ravagers of the face of the earth; and it is no less probable, that these heroes, tyrants, and leaders, were ab origine the prime instigators and leaders of the angelic rebellion and apostacy; the unhappy cause of all our mortal woe.—But surely, “they also have their reward:”—they may possess kingdoms and principalities in this world, but it will be no breach of charity to say, they have no chance for the possession of the kingdom of heaven.—

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On the other hand, reason and observation point out to us, that when God in his justice bestows a happy lot of existence on any of the apostate spirits, either under the human or other form, he consigns them to the superintendence and nurture of such beings, whose dispositions he knows are benevolent and compassionate, perfectly suited to answer his benign purpose.

Sect. 14. IT may be thought strange, that after all that has been said, respecting the transmigration of the apostate spirits through the brutal forms, no consideration has been bestowed upon the numerous insect and reptile race, possessed of
animal

animal life; as if they were shut out, and exempt from, any such designation of providence; no such thing, a distinct place being reserved for that purpose. It is true, the ancient philosophers, but chiefly the Bramins, drew a certain line, beyond which the doctrines of the Metempsychosis did not extend; limiting the transmigration of the apostate spirits to such forms, as exhibit evident marks of rationality, and possess perfect organised bodies, capable of a full display of the five senses; considering all beyond this, as having the *appearance only* of animal life; but are in truth, the common offspring or effects of vegetation, from earth, heat, and moisture: the properties of rationality,

tionality, and a display of the senses, are as manifestly to be observed in the ant and the bee, as in the elephant and the eagle; and in the dwarf, as well as in the giant; and proves, that a pure intelligent spirit is not circumscribed by any determinate space, but may be compressed or expanded by the power of God, or perhaps by his own inherent powers, so as to occupy a *greater* or *lesser* space; in *either* of which, he will be equally capable of exerting his full intellectual powers, when the material form under which he is confined arrives at maturity of growth; the spirit's entering and animating the mortal forms is not a matter of choice, but compulsion, as more than
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once remarked; to which they are under a necessity of accommodating themselves, and conforming to the decrees of their offended Creator.—

The mode of the astonishing union between soul and body surpasses our comprehension;—when the house is completely finished and furnished, the tenant enters, and we may rationally conclude, that the instant of contact between soul and body, is at the perfect formation of the fœtus, when life and motion is given to the animal machine, perceptive to the parent; and at this moment the punishment and sufferings of the offending spirit begin, and follow it in progressive state to the cradle and the grave, in a greater or less degree,

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as vice or virtue, temperance or intemperance, take the lead; that is, on the supposition, the subject is the human form; and here it must be allowed, the spirit's scene of action *originally* is but small; then what shall we think of its situation in animals of a less form, whose magnitude bears no more proportion to that of Man, than Man does to the enormous whale.—Our profound Philosopher MILTON, whose powers of imagery and imagination exceeded all that ever issued, or probably ever will issue, from the human form; clearly gives his conceptions of these celestial beings at their pandemonium council, after our expulsion from the regions of bliss;—

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“ Thus incorporeal spirits to *smallest* forms
 “ Reduced their shapes *immense*, and were at *large*,
 “ Though without number still, amidst the hall
 “ Of that infernal court.”

Sect. 15. ONE phænomenon in nature seems not yet perfectly accounted for, that requires a distinct meditation ;—we see in every nation of people one set of mortals, with their *descendants* in perpetuity, doomed to labor and irksome dependance; and others in their *generations*, born to affluence and joyous independance; —this *succession* of different lots is seen as well in the brutal, as the human forms ;—over and above what has been said, to reconcile the ways of God to Man, respecting the happy and unhappy state of the animal crea-

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tion, as flowing from their merits or demerits in their present state of existence; it is no irrational conjecture to imagine, that amongst the angelic apostates, some tribes were more, others less culpable; and that God, as a just judge, consistent with the laws of distributive justice, has also a perpetual retrospect to the degree of the offending spirits' original guilt; for as before hinted in the primitive creed, Man is not only accountable for the misapplication of his powers in his present state, but in a more especial manner for his first pre-existent lapse and rebellion, typified by MOSES in the fall of Man; and when that inspired philosopher and legislator seems to intimate,

mate, that the inhabitants of the earth are the descendants of *Adam* and *Eve*, he plainly means no more in that beautiful allegory, than that God, in his designation for the propagation of the human species, created one *female* for one *male*, and that a deviation from that law was a transgression of his original institutes.

Sect. 16. HAVING thus, for the relief of some doubts which have long laboured in my own mind, and not without a view at the same time to the good of my fellow-creatures, traced and elucidated every phœnomenon in nature, from God its fountain to the lowest beings of his creation; and humbly assigned the ma-

nifest causes for the formation of this world, Man, and Brute, as being the just consequences of our angelic apostacy; and having also marked the probable means of deprecating the divine displeasure, by adopting a mode of *pure faith* and *worship*, consonant to the conceptions we ought to entertain of a just and merciful Creator;—it remains only, to deplore the unthinking, infatuated state of the human mind, plunged in the perpetual pursuit of vicious and vague enjoyments, unworthy its divine origin and dignity, and destructive of its present and future felicity; this mirror has been held up to mankind by the moralists of every age and nation, without any appearance

ance of amendment; on the contrary, as the world grows older, every species of wickedness seems to grow with it, and gain new strength and vigor, from the throne to the cottage;—we daily hear of parents murdering their offspring, and children imbruing their hands in the blood of their parents;—husbands destroying their wives, and wives poisoning their husbands;—a perpetual invasion of life and property, by every kind of daring violence;—moral rectitude, conjugal fidelity, the laws of society, and the precepts of religion, are become mere insignificant terms;—and suicide, the common result of a life passed in wickedness and folly.—Kings, Princes, and States, in place

of being the fathers and protectors of their people, prove their tyrants and oppressors;—the nobles of the land are debilitated and debased;—the professors of the law prove the instruments of contention, and the bane of society;—the clergy avaricious and voluptuous, and negligent in their holy function;—the soldiery dissolute;—the gentry treading close on the heels of nobility, in imitation of their vices, extravagance, and dissipation;—traders and mechanics under every denomination, adepts in fraud and imposition;—the farmer and his laboring hind, never deficient in low dirty cunning and chicanery;—and the senates corrupt, in consequence of a corrupt people.—

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That there are *some conspicuous* exceptions, in each of these ranks of mankind, is certain; God forbid there should not; but then, their number bears so small a proportion to the mass of offenders, that they are lost and disregarded in the common and universal abyss of depravity and sensuality.—No particular application is here made to *this* or *that* state or kingdom; the portrait too justly resembles every nation or people on the face of the globe:—Can mankind then wonder, that God should punish such atrocious immoral transgressions, by daily visitations of plague, pestilence, famine, earthquakes, tempests, lightnings and inundations? (the natural instruments
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of his displeasure,) and that devastation, shipwreck, death, and dire destruction, should follow?—or that discord, dissention, and rebellion, should erect their standards and overspread the land?—Rather let him wonder at his Creator's clemency and forbearance, that *all these* are not accumulated on him TENFOLD!—To sum up all, the present state of universal criminality considered, what has each delinquent soul, or spirit, rationally to expect, when separated by DEATH, from its mortal covering, but a miserable state of *future existence*, under whatsoever forms God shall be pleased to cloth it with, during the intermediate space between the present, and the final day of Judgment?
—that

—that awful, that tremendous day!
when God's gracious *term of proba-*
tion will be *closed*, not be regained,
to all ETERNITY.

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